

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to any paper(s) indicated above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 46, 49-51, 55 and 59-69 were pending, under consideration and subjected to examination in the Office Action. Appropriate claims have been amended, canceled and/or added (without prejudice or disclaimer) in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such changes are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment and are simply refocused claims in which Applicant is present interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 59-69 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

35 USC '103 REJECTIONS - OBSOLETE VIA CLAIM

CANCELLATION/AMENDMENT

All prior art rejections of claims 46, 49 and 55 as being unpatentable over Meier (U.S. Patent 6,323,566), Landry et al. (U.S. Patent 5,450,438) and Howe et al. (U.S. Patent 5,471,519); the rejection of claim 50 as being unpatentable over Meier (U.S. Patent 6,323,566), Landry et al. (U.S. Patent 5,450,438) and Howe et al. (U.S. Patent 5,471,519) and further in view of Nishimoto et al. (JP 08-284505); the rejection of claim 51 as being unpatentable over Meier (U.S. Patent 6,323,566), Landry et al. (U.S. Patent 5,450,438) and Howe et al. (U.S. Patent 5,471,519) and further in view of Takano (JP 04-315684), are respectfully traversed, but the present cancellation/ amendment of such claims (without prejudice or disclaimer) to obtain a

patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible, has rendered such rejection(s) obsolete, and thus gratuitous traversal arguments concerning the rejection(s) are omitted for brevity. Further discussions/arguments concerning such rejection(s) are left for the future if/when appropriate. Based upon the following, reconsideration and withdrawal of such rejection(s) are respectfully requested.

The above statements, or any present cancellation of claims (without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that the rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter, but is merely use of a procedural approach to obtain a patent (without prejudice or disclaimer) on ones of the allowable claims as quickly as possible.

ALLOWED CLAIMS

Claims 59-69 (all remaining claims) have been allowed in the application, as indicated within the section number "7" on page 5 of the Office Action. Applicant and the undersigned respectfully thank the Examiner for such indication of allowable subject matter.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington, D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR '1.136. Authorization is herein given to charge any shortage in the fees, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case No. 500.37389CX1) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Based upon all of the foregoing, allowance of all presently-pending claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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